HERALD OF GOSPEL LIBERTY.

BY ELIAS SMITH.

NO. 7.] THURSDAY EVENING, NOVEMBER 24, 1808. [VOL. 1.

"FROM REALMS FAR DISTANT, AND FROM CITIES UNKNOWN; WE MAKE THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR KING YOURS."

LIBERTY. NO. 7.

The English Hierarchy.

BEFORE we define the English Hierarchy, it is proper to give the meaning of the word. "It is taken from the French word Hierarchie, and the latin, Hierarchia, and signifies, *church government*.

It was first used to describe an order of the Angels, or subordination among them, as some men called *divines*, supposed. They concluded that this Hierarchy consisted of nine:—— 1st. *Seraphim*; 2d. *Cherubim*; 3d. *Thrones*; 4th. *Dominions*; 5th. *Principalities*; 6th. *Powers*; 7th. *Virtues*; 8th *Angels*; 9th. *Archangels*.

The following is the meaning of the word given by an English writer in the Encyclopedia:

This word "denotes the subordination of Angels. HIERARCHY, likewise denotes the subordination of the *clergy*, ecclesiastical polity, or the constitution and government of the christian church considered as a society."

The Hierarchy of England is, properly speaking, an invention of designing men, called an ecclesiastical government, designed to keep the people in ignorance, under the name of religion, to rule them; obtain their money; and support a set of useless idlers upon the hard earnings of those whom they oppress and impoverish.

All this I think will appear plain to every one who is acquainted with it.

The foundation of this Hierarchy, is the thirty-nine articles and book of common prayers; which has many times been altered, and considered exactly right every time.

This worldly government called religion, is upheld by the common law of England, and is called the established religion of that country. This Hierarchy is exactly represented by John, under the similitude of a prostitute (the mother of harlots) riding on a scarlet coloured beast, with a golden cup in her hand, making the nations drunk and mad with its contents; "With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication." "And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, &c."

By reason of this *Hierarchy* the people in England are unnaturally divided into two classes; *Clergy*, and *Laity*. By *Clergy* they mean men in holy orders; by *Laity*, the common people, or lower rank; as though all men were not born free and equal.

In this *Hierarchy* are *eight* orders or classes of officers, as so many dead weights to oppress the people. 1st. *Archbishops*. This signifies a chief bishop, he is the chief of the clergy in a whole province, and has the inspection of the bishops of that province, as well as of the inferior clergy, and may deprive them on notorious cause. He is chosen by the king.

Blackstone says, "it is likewise the privilege by custom, of the *Arch-Bishop* of Canterbury, to crown the kings and the queens of this kingdom." When the arch-bishops resign, it must be to the king only.

The difference between an arch-bishop and and bishop is this, an *arch-bishop* with bishops consecrate a bishop, as a bishop and priest ordain a priest, &c. All bishops of England are peers of the realm, except the bishop of *Man*; and as such, set, and vote, in the house of lords. They have the title of *lords*, and *right reverend fathers in God*. Besides two *arch-bishops*, there are *twenty four* bishops in England.

What kind of figure would such titled gentlemen make *in* this country! Would men bow the knee to them? They [illegible] will, until every trace of civil and religious liberty is unknown to the civil and religious leader in America.

2d. Next to the Bishops, are what they call a *Dean* and *Chapter*. These, "are the council of the bishop, to assist him with their advice in affairs of religion, and in the temporal concerns of his See."

3d. Next to these is the *Arch-Deacon*; "he hath an ecclesiastical jurisdiction, immediately subordinate to the bishop, throughout the whole of his diocese (the bound of his jurisdiction) or in some particular part of it. He is appointed by the bishop, visits the clergy, and has his separate court for punishing offenders, by spiritual censures, and for hearing all other causes of ecclesiastical cognizance."

4th, Another class of officers are called *Rural Deans*. These are deputies of the bishop, placed all round his diocese, the better to inspect the conduct of the parochial clergy.

5th. The next and most numerous of all the officers in this Hierarchy, are the *Parsons* and *Vicars*.

The word *Parson* comes from *persona ecclesiae*, and is one that has full possession of all the rights of a parochial church. He is called *parson*, because by his person the church, which is considered an invisible body, is represented; and he is in himself a *body corporate*. A *parson* in England has, during his life, the freehold in himself of the *parsonage house*, the *glebe*, the *tithes*, and other *dues*.

The difference between a *parson* and *vicar* is this; the *parson* has for the most part the whole right to all the ecclesiastical dues in his parish; but a *vicar* (which means one who acts for another) has generally an appropriator over him: entitled to the best part of the *profits*, to whom he is in effect perpetual curate, with a standing salary. The manner of inducting men into office is this, it is done by a *mandate* from the bishop to the *arch-deacon*, who usually issues out a precept to other clergymen to perform it for him. It is done by giving the clerk corporal possession of the church, as by holding the *ring*, of the *door*; tolling a bell, or the like, and is a form required by law, with intent to give all the parishioners notice, and sufficient certainty of their minister to whom their *tithes* are to be paid.

These men must never be gone out of the parish six weeks at once during life, and they must live in the parsonage house, and no other; the people must pay them a tenth of all they have, like them or not. *Bondage* to the *parson*, *bondage* to the *people*, *bondage* to *all!!*

Curates. The original meaning of [illegible] is that of one that attends to the spiritual concerns of men in a parish. They are properly a clergyman's *journeymen*. They cannot by law have more than 50l. per year, nor less than 20l. These are in general miserable creatures, who take care to keep the people in ignorance; that is, they do not learn them any thing.

These six classes come under the name of the *Clergy* of England.

7th. Besides these, there are *Church Wardens*, who are considered the guardians or keepers of the Church, and representatives of the body of the parish.

8th. *Parish Clerks*, and *Sextons*, belong with the rest. The clerk is sworn in by the *Arch-Deacon*, and probably he swears when he is in.

This is the government which many people in this country admire, which has been, and is a curse to any nation. What hope is there of religious liberty here? None!!

Dissenters from this are tolerated; but they must pay tithes to these priests, and then support their own ministers if they can.

When the common people have paid 900,000l. to the king; paid parliament, paid all the taxes for the *army* and *navy*; the interest of the national debt; parish tax for the poor; a tenth of all their income to support this *Hierarchy*, with all the rest; what is there

left? *Bondage, ignorance, oppression, distress, potatoes* and a little *salt*; and the name of being a free people, with their sons exposed to the press gang, with almost all other miseries.

Under this Hierarchy, no man is allowed to preach in a private house, unless it is licenced by parliament, and then they are exposed to many insults from violent mobs. This is the government of tyrants, from which America was once delivered; and from which we are now clear.

Let us never again be entangled with this yoke of bondage.

[N B. This description of the English Hierarchy, is taken principally from Blackstone's Commentaries on the laws of England, and may be relied on as true.]

THE PREACHER.

SERMON No. v.

JAMES i, 27. "*Pure Religion.*"

RELIGION, is a word used by all classes of people, in almost all parts of the world.

But few mean the same thing by the word. Many are ignorant of the meaning of the word, though they often use it.

We will here give the meaning, from the Encyclopedia, and the Scriptures.

The word *Religion*, from the latin, *Religio*, is derived according to Servius and most modern grammarians, from the word *religare*, "to bind fast." According to this meaning of the word, it denotes that obligation which we stand to some superior power.

Whatever men think their creator requires them to believe or practice, may properly be called *religion*, or something binding.

Many things are said to be binding which are not, and many things, we are bound to believe and practise, which some have taught are not binding on men: hence, traditions, commandments and doctrines of men are introduced as binding on men, and the commandments of God made of no effect by men's traditions.

From this arises the distinction of *true* and *false religion*. This distinction includes the whole of what is called *religion* in the world.

The word religion is mentioned five times only in the scriptures. Four times it is used to describe the obligations men are under according to the commandments and doctrines of men, Acts xxvi, 5. "Which knew me from the beginning (if they would testify) that after the most straitest sect of our *religion*, I lived a Pharisee. Gal. i, 13, 14. "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past, in the Jews *religion*, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it; and profited in the Jews' *religion* above many my equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." James i, 26. "If any man among you seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's *religion* is vain."

The word in the text is mentioned, to shew what God our Creator binds us to attend to.—"*Pure religion*, and undefiled before God and the Father is this; to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

The whole of this "*pure religion*," is summed up in the words of Paul to Titus. Titus ii, 11, 12, 13. "For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; teaching us that denying ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

When we are taught to worship the true God according to the commands or traditions of men; obedience to such commands is disobedience to God, and is false *religion*. Obedience to the command of the true God, is true religion, all the rest is false.

The principal cause of so many kinds of religion in the world, as they are called, is this; while men are agreed that there is one God, they differ concerning the one through whom he has spoken to men.

The deist says creation is the voice of God. The Hindoos say he has spoken through the Bramins or Priests. The Mahometans say the one God has made his mind known through Mahomet. The Papists through the Pope.—The Jews, "[illegible] that God spake unto Moses, and they will believe no other. So of the rest. Some christians not wholly out of mystery Babylon, say God has spoken to them through Christ, Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Hopkins, Gill, Arius, Arminius, and several others. Real christians believe God has spoken to them by his Son, and that they are bound to hear him in all things, not regarding any of the commands or doctrines of men. They consider creeds, covenants, platforms, articles, disciplines, systems of Divinity, &c. as useless things; because they are inventions of men, and not the commands of Christ:

Many people, believe in God, and have a form of goodness but are abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.

That only deserves the name of *pure religion*, which leads from every thing not commanded by God through Christ, and which leads men to consider themselves bound to hear him in all things which he commands.

How glorious is that religion which Jesus taught, and which those enjoy who learn of him; a religion not calculated for one nation only; but for the good of all who obey the Gospel!

"How many calamities has it soothed!—How many tears wiped away: how many doors thrown open to the guilty! How many supports given to the innocent! It does not allow a single day to hatred; but promises eternity to love. Ah! if this religion was designed only for the consolation of the miserable, it was, of course, designed to promote that of the human race!"

As Jesus Christ is the one we are to hear in all things, respecting religion, as to belief and practice, it is of the greatest importance constantly to hear and obey him; thus, glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life will be ours. Amen.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Copy of a letter from Elder Stinchfield to the Editor, dated Georgetown Nov. 3d. 1808.

It will be pleasing (doubtless) for you to receive intelligence from any quarter of the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom. If you think the following worthy a place in your paper, make what use of it you think proper.

Parker's Island on the East side of Kennebeck river belongs to this town. It has had a company of disciples belonging to our society nearly 30 years; they amounted to about 50 members last June. A few months previous to this, several inhabitants of the Island had been taken away by death. Some of them were disciples, and left a testimony behind them on their dying beds of the reality of the christian religion. This took a deep effect on the minds of many poor sinners, and there appeared a great attention among the people to hear the word, and a great cry in the hearts of Christians that God would revive his work. On the morning of the 20th of June, we had a considerable shock of an earthqurke: In this quarter, one man who had been very vile before, was so shocked with the earthquake, and a sense of his own awful situation out of Christ, that he cried out for mercy to the Lord and found pardon; and with two others were baptized the same day. The next Lord's Day three others were baptized; meantime, several Preachers of different denominations visited the Island, and the attention of the people increased daily, until the 15th of September, when the power of God appeared among the people not unlike the rushing of a mighty wind: within three weeks, about one hundred were brought to rejoice in the Lord; upwards of sixty had been baptized by Elders Mc Henry and Hinkley, and joined the church, when I came to the Island, which I found sounding with praises to the Redeemer, and cries to the Lord for mercy. I have seen a large number brought to rejoice in the Lord the few days I have been with them;—I have baptized 20, and expect soon to baptize again. The cries of wounded sinners salute my ears in almost every meeting, and the shouts of glory from those who have found forgiveness as often warm my heart. I have been in a work of God ever since I left you, have baptized 220; the principal part since last Spring. I long to visit Portmouth, Kittery, and the other places where I have been ac-

quainted, but the work of God in Waterville, Knox, Lincolnville, Cambden, Bristol, Georgetown, &c, &c. occupies all my attention at present; so that I have hardly time to visit my own family.

But may the Lord bless them all; I know I love them, and pray for them, though I cannot visit them I hope to meet them all in the great meeting if not before.

Your unworthy Brother,

EPHRAIM STINCHFIELD.

Copy of a letter from Elder Foster, dated Winchester (Virginia) Nov. 7, 1807.

DEAR SIR,

Though I have never had the pleasure to see you and probably never may, have nevertheless taken the liberty of addressing a line to you, having heard of you by the hearing of the ear, and merely, to all human appearance, by chance; but no doubt under the direction of God whose providence superintends all his works, and whose especial love is eminently manifested to his faithful children every where. Before I proceed any farther, must inform you how I became acquainted with your profession both as a christian and Minister, and your place of abode.

A person who called himself Andrew Harpingding (a baptist preacher) having made an appointment to preach in Winchester last Tuesday evening; I gave him an invitation to sup with me, with which he complied, and in the course of our social conversation he asked me my religious profession; to which I answered, that I denied every name but that of Christian, and every book of discipline or spiritual law but the word of God; and after some desultory conversation he mentioned your name in the following manner,—"That there was a Minister in the town of Portsmouth State of Newhampshire who held the same sentiments with me and who acknowledged no other name; and that you had published a number of tracts on religious subjects, and among the rest one entitled the "Looking Glass," of which he said so much that I felt a strong desire to see it, therefore, hope you will be so good as to send it by post, for which I will send you when published, which I expect will be in a short time, a small Pamphlet entitled, "A Scriptural Description of a true Christian Church."

If the account, Mr. Harpingding gave me of you be correct and I take it for granted, I can inform you of some particulars which will increase your joy, and faith (if need be) and of which you will say "It is the Lords doings and is marvellous in our eyes."

In the States of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and I believe in Ohio, and Tennessee, Christian Societies are raised, who have introduced Gospel order among themselves, that is have taken the scriptures only as their sole rule of faith and practice, and acknowledge no other head but Jesus, thro' whose merits they preach a free salvation for all men; they have a number of eminent Ministers among them.—They acknowledge no name but that of Christian; and what is the most extraordinary circumstance respecting them and what I believe they may challenge the records of every period of the annals of time to exhibit its equal, is, numbers of them, agreeably to the best information I have, orginated nearly at the same time, I am credibly informed they were formed into a religious compact without any knowledge whatever of each other; and what adds still to the phenomenon (if I may call it so) is, they have embraced the same sentiments and adopted the same mode in every particular, which go almost directly to destroy ecclesiastical and every species of religious tyranny, and to establish in the room thereof a primitive or apostolical form of church Government: but more need not be said concerning them as the Pamphlet I shall send you, provided you communicate with me, will give I presume more satisfaction than I at present can give you.—I now would take the liberty to ask you a few questions, which I hope you will do me the pleasure of answering, or if not, will pardon my presumption.—And first, Have you ever heard of any of the churches that I have now mentioned to you? If you have, does the account I have given correspond with the accounts you heard before? You may rely upon the account I have given to be correct as far as I am acquainted with the subject. Again Do you agree both in name, Doctrine and discipline with the Churches above mentioned as far as I have explained those particulars to you? What do your enemies or the sectaries call you? They call us republican Methodists, but bless God the name as it respects a religious appellation is dying. Again, If you answer the description I have had of you, tell me how long have you been in Gospel order, and what gave you first to see the Propriety of that order? My dear Brother (permit me to call you so) if your heart and hand is with us, be kind enough to let me hear from you and as far as you can, with propriety, answer the foregoing questions; they will no doubt, prove a great blessing to the Christian Churches to whom I shall make them known; which shall by the permission of our blessed master be to a goodly number of them.

Elias Smith Minister in the Christian Church at Portsmouth.

I remain your brother in the bonds of a peaceful Gospel.

JONATHAN FOSTER.

My Brother, we have no reverend, or right reverends among us, no masters we are all brethren.

Religious names explained.

To the Editor of the "Herald of Gospel Liberty,"

DEAR SIR,

WHILE looking over the different Names by which the children of God are distinguished and too much separated, I have been led to search for their origin, that I might be satisfied which was right, and most agreeable to Scripture. The following is the result of an impartial enquiry.

Although there are many hundred different denominations in the world, I shall confine my observations to the *eleven* following, which comprehend about all the religious denominations in this country.

1st. Papists. 2d. Presbyterians. 3d. Congregationalists. 4th. Methodists. 5th. Episcopalians. 6th. Universalists. 7th. Quakers or Friends. 8th. Shaking Quakers. 9th. Baptists. 10th Freewill Baptists. 11th. Christians.

1st PAPISTS. They are so called, by Protestants, from their adhering to the Pope. *Roman Catholics*, is the title they give themselves. The word *Pope* is derived from the Greek of *Pappas*, or the Latin *Pappa*, which signifies *Father*. Hence he is stiled the father of the church. This Pontiff is stiled the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the visible head of the Church and the successor of St. Peter.

2d. PRESBYTERIANS. The title *Presbyterian*, comes from the Greek word *Presbuteros*, which signifies senior or Elder: they maintain that the church should be governed by Presbyteries, synods and general assemblies. (See Evens' Sketch, page 133.) Presbyter or Elder is a word borrowed from the Greek translation of the Old Testament, where it commonly signifies Ruler or Governor; it being a note of Office and Dignity, not of age; and in this sense Bishops are sometimes called Presbyters in the New-Testament. Hence the Presbyterians are so called from their maintaining that the government of the church appointed in the New-Testament was by Presbyteries, that is, by associations of Ministers and ruling Elders, possessed all of equal powers, without any superiority among them either in office or order.—(See Encyclopedia.)

3d. CONGREGATIONALISTS. This denomination maintain that each particular church has authority from Christ for exercising government, and enjoying all the ordinances of worship within itself. Hence they were first called *Independents*, and afterward Congregationalists. The first Independent Congregational Church in England was established by Mr. Jacob, in the year 1616. (See Hannah Adams' view of Rel. and Evens' Sketch.)

4th. METHODISTS. The word *Methodist* has six meanings; or there are six classes of people called by that name.

1st. It originated first in the church of Rome, and was first given in the 17th Century, to a new species of *polemic Doctors*, who distinguished themselves by their zeal and dexterity, in defending the Roman Catholic Church against the attacks of the Protestants." [See Moshem, vol. iv. p. 307.]

2. The word Methodists was next used to distinguish a sect of *ancient physicians*. The following is an account of them given in the

Encyclopedia. "*Methodists*, [Methodici] in the history of medicine, a set of ancient physicians, who reduced the whole art of healing to a few common principles, or appearances.—These Methodists were the followers of Thessalus; whence they were also called Thessalici."

3d. The word is used to describe the followers of *Mr. George Whitfield*, who was an Episcopalian, and a zealous Calvinistic preacher; who maintained the calvinistic doctrines as explained in the articles of the church of England.

4th. The word Methodist is used to describe the followers of *Mr. John Wesley*. This "sect was founded in the year 1729, by one Mr. Morgan and Mr. John Wesley. In the month of November that year, they begun to spend some evenings in reading the Greek Testament, along with Mr. Charles Wesley student, Mr. Morgan commoner of Christ-Church, and Mr. Kirkham of Merton College. The next year two scholars obtained leave to attend these evening meetings. In 1735, Mr. Whitfield joined with them, then in his 18th year.

At this time the wickedness of the kingdom was very great; "The Methodists are said, with great probability, to have been very instrumental in stemming this torrent. They obtained their name from the exact regularity of their lives; which gave occasion to a young gentleman of Christ-Church to say, "*Here is a new set of Methodists sprung up*;" alluding to a sect of ancient physicians which went by that name." They were afterwards called *Sacramentarians*, and the *godly club*.

All this was done, before Mr. Wesley professed to be born again, or to know how to preach Christ.

This class of Methodists profess to be Arminians, and were warmly opposed by those who held to the doctrine of Calvin.

They are Episcopalians, holding to the government of a bishop. In this country they have, instead of the thirty nine articles and book of common prayers a book called, "The doctrines and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in America." There are many things in it like the common prayer book of England; such as forms of prayer, &c. and some things contrary to the New-Testament. They preach by the scriptures, and rule the church by the *discipline*; notwithstanding this, there are many valuable lovers of Jesus among them.

The ministers have the New Testament translated by Mr. Wesley, which some carry with them, which in several things differs from our translation; and which they are very fond of, an account of Mr. Wesley's notes added to it.

A writer in the Encyclopedia has made the following statement concerning them in England.

"At present, those who remain with Mr. Wesley, are mostly Church-of-England men. They love her articles, her homilies, her liturgy, her discipline, and unwillingly vary from it in any instance." See Ency.

5. The word Methodist, means those who have within a few years, in England, separated from the followers of Mr. Wesley. These are called New Methodists.

The following description of the New Methodists, is given by the ingenious Mr. Evans in his Sketch; page, 175.

The new Methodist connection, among the followers of Mr. Wesley, separated from the original Methodists in 1797. The grounds of their separation, they declare to be *church government*, and not docrines as affirmed by some of their opponents. They object to the old Methodists, for having formed a *Hierarchy* or *priestly corporation*; and say that in so doing, they have robbed the people of those principles, that as members of a christian church they are entitled to by reason and scripture.—The *new Methodists* have therefore attempted to establish every part of their church government on popular principles, and profess to have united as much as possible the ministers and the people in every department of it. This is quite contrary to the original government of the Methodists, which in the most important cases is confined only to the ministers. This, indeed, appears most plainly, when their conference or yearly meeting is considered; for in this meeting, no person, who is not a *travelling preacher*, has ever been suffered to enter as a member of it; and, indeed, this is the point to which the preachers have always stedfastly adhered with the utmost firmness and resolution, and on which the division entirely rests. They are also upbraided by the *New Methodists*, for having abused the power they have assumed. A great many of these abuses, the *New Methodists* have formerly protested against, which are enumerated in various publications.

The *New Methodists* profess to proceed upon liberal, open, and ingenuous principles, in the construction of their plan of *church government*, and their ultimate decision in all disputed matters, is in their popular annual assembly, chosen by certain rules from among the preachers and societies."

6th. The word Methodist is used in England frequently, to denominate all dissenters from the church of England. Though unscriptural, yet quite popular in Rome and elsewhere. *(To be Continued.)*

As we have in a former number mentioned the death of Elder Benjamin Rendāl of New-Durham, we here insert the order of his funeral, as communicated to the Editor, in a letter from a Brother.

On the 26th day of Oct. A. D. 1808, his Remains were committed to the earth after a lengthy discourse well adapted to the solemn occasion, and delivered by Elder John Buzzell, from Tim. iv. 7, 8, 9. I have fought the good fight, &c. The arrangement of the mourners and funeral procession was in the manner following, viz:

1st. Out of 17 teaching Elders present, 6 were appointed to carry the corps to the grave.

2d. Elder John Buzzell and the widow walked next to the corps, followed by all the natural relations in their order,

3d. The Eldeas and Deacons then the church members.

4th. The Physicians that attended upon him in the course of his sickness.

5th. The civil and military officers of the town, and all that were present.

6th. The spectators which made a long train, such as was never seen before in this part of the country, for the collection of people was like one of our yearly meetings, and every class of our citizens appeared to be soleman, which clearly manifested the regard they had for their departed friend.

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